

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4573

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 CAPE TOWN 0447

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PINT, WA

SUBJECT: NAMIBIAN SITREP

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. STEADY BUT SLOW PROGRSS SEEMS TO BE BEING
MADE TOWARD CONSTITUTIONAL TALKS IN NAMIBIA. WHITE LEADERS
WHO ARE SPEARHEADING EFFORT TO GET TALKS STARTED, PERHAPS BY
LATTER PART OF THIS YEAR, ARE BEING BOTH HINDERED AND AIDED
BY BLACK DISUNITY. SWA AUTHORITIES HAVE INSTITUTED MAJOR
STUDY ON ENDING ASPECTS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION. STUDY
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WILL BE TIME CONSUMING, BUT IT POSSIBLE SOME INITIAL ACTION

AGAINST "PETTY APARTHEID" COULD TAKE PLACE NEXT MONTH. WHITES REMAIN BENT ON COURSE OF IGNORING UNITED NATIONS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE, EXCLUDING SWAPO FROM TALKS AS LONG AS SWAPO INSISTS ON BEING SOLE REPRESENTATIVE OF NAMIBIAN PEOPLE, AND ESTABLISHING CONFEDERATION, WITH OR WITHOUT OVAMBOS, WHICH WOULD PROVIDE BEST PROTECTION FOR THEMSELVES IN AN INDEPENDENT NAMIBIA. THEY MAY BE AIDED IN ACHIEVING THIS BY OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS' FEAR OF SWAPO/OVAMBO DOMINATION. STILL, THERE A LONG WAY TO GO BEFORE CONSTITUTIONAL TALKS BEGIN, AND EVEN IF THEY TAKE PLACE WHITES STILL FACE GREAT DIFFICULTY OF REACHING AGREEMENT WITH BLACKS ON FORM OF GOVERNMENT, LOCUS OF POLITICAL POWER AND SHARE OF TERRITORY'S ECONOMIC WEALTH. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING FOUR-DAY TRIP TO WINDHOEK TO OBSERVE MERORO TRIAL (CAPE TOWN 441 NOTAL), POL COUNSELOR TALKED TO SEVERAL PROMINENT NAMIBIAN POLITICAL FIGURES. FROM CONVERSATIONS, HE CONCLUDED THAT BLACK DISUNITY, WHITE CAUTIOUSNESS, AND BLACKS' DISTRUST OF WHITES INDICATE CONSTITUTIONAL TALKS (AS THEY ARE NOW TERMED IN NAMIBIA) WILL NOT GET UNDERWAY UNTIL LATTER PART O F YEAR AT EARLIEST, UNLESS FACTORS NOW UNFORESEEN INTERVENE TO HASTEN PROCESS.

3. ALL ETHNIC GROUPS EXCEPT DAMARAS AND HEREROS HAVE NOW AGREED TO PARTICIPATE IN TALKS. OVAMBOS, KAVANGOS, CAPRIVIANS, COLOREDS, NAMAS (AT LEAST SOME NAMAS), AND BASTERS ARE PREPARED SEND REPS. UNTIL RECENTLY BASTERS OPPOSED TALKS, BUT IN ELECTION EARLIER THIS MONTH, ANTI-SAG VOLKSPARTY WAS DEFEATED IN BASTER COUNCIL ELECTION, AND THOSE WHO FAVOR TALKS NOW CONTROL THE COUNCIL. DIRK MUDGE, THE LEADING NATIONAL PARTY POLITICIAN IN NAMIBIA AND CHAIRMAN OF LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, SAID HE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT PROGRESS, THOUGHT DAMARAS WOULD COME AROUND SOON, BUT ADMITTED HEREROS WERE PROBLEM. DAMARAS SPLIT INTO AT LEAST FOUR GROUPS OVER ISSUE OF TALKS, AND ONLY WAY TO RESOLVE THIS WILL BE BY MEANS OF ELECTION. ACCORDING TO RELIABLE WINDHOEK JOURNALIST, ELECTION PROCESS LIKELY TO TAKE SEVERAL MONTHS.

4. MUDGE AND BILLY MARAIS, OFFICIAL IN CHARGE OF NEWLY-
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ESTABLISHED SWA DEPARTMENT OF CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT, BELIEVE THAT HEREROS CONSTITUTE EVEN GREATER OBSTACLE TO COMMENCEMENT OF TALKS. IT NOT SO MUCH OSTENSIBLY TOUGH CONDITIONS WHICH CHIEF CLEMENS KAPUUNO SAYS MUST BE MET BEFORE HE AGREES TO PARTICIPATE (E.G., RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS), FOR KAPUUNO HAS SHOWN HE AMENABLE TO COMPROMISE ON THESE. FOR INSTANCE, KAPUUNO ADMITTED TO POL COUNSELOR THAT "IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO RELEASE ALL POLITICAL

PRISONERS," AND THAT WHAT HE MEANT WAS AUTHORITIES SHOULD "MAKE A GESTURE" AND RELEASE "SOME" POLITICAL PRISONERS. MAIN PROBLEM FACING MUDGE AND MARAIS REGARDING HEREROS IS TO DETERMINE WHO WILL REPRESENT THEM AT TALKS. NEITHER KAPUUNO NOR ANY OF THE OTHER HEREROS WHO CLAIM TO BE CHIEF OF HERERO NATION WILL AGREE TO AN ELECTION. MUDGE HINTED CONFIDENTIALLY TO POL COUNSELOR POSSIBLE WAY OUT. HE SAID IT WOULD BE A SHAME TO DISAPPOINT THOSE HEREROS WHO HAD SUPPORTED WHITE AUTHORITIES ON SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT, BUT HE DETERMINED TALKS MUST BE HELD AND THAT PARTICIPANTS MUST BE TRULY REPRESENTATIVE OF THEIR PEOPLE. THEREFORE, HE "EXPECTS" THAT KAPUUNO WILL BE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN TALKS AS LEADER OF MAJORITY OF HEREROS, WHICH MUDGE AND OTHER WHITES CONCEDE IS THE CASE.

5. SWAPO IN NAMIBIA, LIKE SWAPO IN EXILE, REMAINS ADAMANTLY OPPOSED TO TALKS, ACCORDING TO AXEL JOHANNES, SWAPO'S ACTING SECRETARY GENERAL. SWAPO'S DISTRUST OF WHITE AUTHORITIES HAS BEEN INTENSIFIED, HE SAID, BECAUSE IN RECENT WEEKS GOVERNMENT HAS TURNED DOWN THREE REQUESTS BY SWAPO TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETINGS IN KATATURA. MOREOVER, TRIBAL POLICE IN OVAMBO RAIDED PARTY BY OVAMBO CHURCH GROUPS ON DAY BEFORE EASTER, ARRESTED ONE MAN, BEAT UP TWO OTHERS, AND TOLD WIFE OF A MAN NOT PRESENT THAT THEY WERE GOING TO KILL HER HUSBAND (ALL THE MEN ARE SWAPO MEMBERS). AS RESULT OF THIS, BISHOPS WOOD, AUALA, AND DE VRIES HAVE APPLIED FOR AND RECEIVED A JUDICIAL INTERDICT TO PROHIBIT POLICE ACTION AGAINST MAN WHO WAS THREATENED, AND HAVE BROUGHT SUIT FOR DAMAGES AGAINST POLICE (DETAILS BY AIRGRAM).

6. ALTHOUGH THEY OPPOSE REPRESSION OF SWAPO. SOME NON-OVAMBO LEADERS ARE INCREASINGLY BITTER AT SWAPO'S INSISTENCE THAT IT IS SOLE REPRESENTATIVE OF NAMIBIAN PEOPLE. KAPUUNO IS CONFIDENTIAL

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BITTER THAT AFRICAN STATES CONTINUE TO ACCORD THIS STATUS TO SWAPO AND SAID HE HOPES TO TRAVEL TO LAGOS AND DAR ES SALAAM TO ARGUE THAT OTHER AFRICAN ORGANIZATIONS IN NAMIBIA HAVE RIGHT TO BE RECOGNIZED AS LEGITIMATE SPOKESMEN FOR THEIR PEOPLE, AND THAT SWAPO SPEAKS ONLY FOR OVAMBOS. (KAPUUNO ADDED THAT HE WOULD NOT GO TO LUSAKA, BECAUSE SWAPO BROADCASTS OVER RADIO ZAMBIA HAVE SINGLED HIM OUT AS STOOGE OF WHITES AND CALLED FOR HIS DEATH.) SWANU CHAIRMAN GERSON VEII ALSO VOICED HIS BITTERNESS AND FRUSTRATION AT SWAPO'S PREFERRED STATUS AND SAID HE TOO PLANS TO PUT HIS CASE TO OUTSIDE AFRICANS (UNLIKE KAPUUNO, HE WANTS TO VISIT LUSAKA).

7. PROBABLY MORE IMPORTANT THEN KAPUUNO'S AND VEII'S RESENTMENT AGAINST SWAPO, IS THAT (BLACK) EVANGELI-

CAL LUTHERAN CHURCH'S BISHOP, DR. J.L. DE VRIES, IS
SISILLUSIONED WITH SWAPO. UNTIL RECENTLY DE VRIES HAD
SUPPORTED SWAPO, BUT HE SAID HE HAS COME TO BELIEVE THAT
CONSTITUTIONAL TALKS ARE DESIRABLE AVENUE TO PEACEFUL SOLU-
TION OF NAMIBIAN PROBLEM AND THAT HE VIEWS SWAPO'S
INTRANSIGENCE AS UNREALISTIC. FURTHER, HE REGARDS SWAPO'S
CLAIM TO BE SOLE REP OF NAMIBIANS TO BE A DISUNIFYING
FACTOR AMONG BLACKS. GERSON VEII ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT
BLACK DISUNITY, BUT HE REMAINS OPPOSED TO TALKS.
HE PLANS TO WRITE LEADERS OF ALL GROUPS IN NATIONAL CONVEN-
TION AND BREAKAWAY NAMIBIAN NATIONAL CONVENTION IN ORDER TO
CONVINCE THEM TO UNITE AGAINST WHITES, REJECT TALKS, AND
CALL FOR IMMEDIATE INDEPENDENCE.

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

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R 181545Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 CAPE TOWN 0447

8. WHITES CONTINUE TO PLAY ON BLACK FEARS OF DOMINATION BY OVAMBOS IN AN INDEPENDENT NAMIBIA. PLAN TO HIVE OFF OWAMBO FROM REST OF TERRITORY (WHICH FIRST CAME TO OUR NOTICE IN 1973) IS STILL IN THE WIND, BUT WHITES ARE NOW LESS CATEGORIC ABOUT THIS THAN BEFORE. MARAIS, FOR EXAMPLE, SAID AN INDEPENDENT OWAMBO IS POSSIBLE, BUT ONLY IF OVAMBOS OPT FOR IT AND THEN GET PERMISSION OF OTHER GROUPS. THIS, HE ADDED, SHOULD NOT BE TOO HARD TO DO BECAUSE OF LATTER'S WISH TO AVOID OWAMBO DOMINANCE. MARAIS THEN SAID OVAMBOS COULD STAY WITH REST OF SWA IF THEY WERE PREPARED TO
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PARTICIPATE IN A CONFEDERATION.

9. ONE IMPORTANT REASON MANY BLACKS CONTINUE TO DISTRUST MUDGE, WHO PROBABLY MAKING SINCERE EFFORT TO ESTABLISH CONSTITUTION FOR AN INDEPENDENT NAMIBIA (ALBEIT A CONSTITUTION EMBODYING A CONFEDERAL ARRANGEMENT WHICH WOULD OFFER BEST PROTECTION FOR WHITES), IS THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO VISIBLE SIGN THAT RACIAL DISCRIMINATION BEING EASED. MUDGE EXPLAINED TO POL COUNSELOR THAT WHEN SWA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PASSED RESOLUTION MARCH 20 ASKING ITS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TO TAKE "FURTHER STEPS TO PROMOTE PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE AND THE RECOGNITION OF HUMAN DIGNITY IN EVERYONE," IT WAS DECIDED NOT RPT NOT TO BEGIN TO ELIMINATE CERTAIN DISCRIMINATORY MEASURES IN A PIECEMEAL FASHION, BUT TO CONDUCT THOROUGH STUDY OF SITUATION FIRST, AND THEN "DO AWAY WITH ALL UNNECESSARY FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION." HE ADMITTED STUDY WOULD TAKE "A NUMBER OF MONTHS."

10. REMINDING MUDGE THAT SECURITY COUNCIL WOULD ONCE AGAIN TAKE UP NAMIBIAN QUESTION AT END OF MAY, POL COUNSELOR SAID SLOW PROGRESS TOWARD CONSTITUTIONAL TALKS AND, ESPECIALLY, FAILURE TO HAVE DONE AWAY WITH ANY ASPECT OF DISCRIMINATION WOULD BE VIEWED HIGHLY UNFAVORABLY. MERE STUDY, HOWEVER NECESSARY, WOULD NOT BE ENOUGH. IN SUBSEQUENT MEETING MUDGE SAID HE HAD REFLECTED ON WHAT POL COUNSELOR HAD SAID AND FELT INDEED THAT FAILURE TO HAVE TAKEN ANY CONCRETE STEPS COULD BE BADLY INTERPRETED. HE NOTED THAT THERE ARE MANY VERKRAMPTE (REACTIONARIES) IN SWA. NEVERTHELESS, HE CLAIMED TO BE MAKING GOOD PROGRESS IN CONVINCING WHITES THEY MUST ACCEPT CHANGE. HE SAID HE WOULD DO HIS BEST, DURING MAY SESSION OF SWA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, TO GET SOME POSITIVE RESULTS ON ENDING SOME ASPECTS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION.

11. BISHOP DE VRIES HAS BEEN SEEING MUDGE AND PLANS TO SEE HIM LATER THIS MONTH. HE SAID HE WILL STRESS TO MUDGE THAT WHITES MUST DO SOMETHING RIGHT AWAY ABOUT DISCRIMINATION. THIS SHOULD BE DONE NOT ONLY TO SHOW PROGRESS TO OUTSIDE WORLD, BUT ALSO TO DEMONSTRATE GOOD FAITH TO NAMIBIAN BLACKS AND THEREBY POSSIBLY HELP PAVE WAY TOWARD CONFIDENTIAL

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CONSTITUTIONAL TALKS.

12. COMMENT: BARRING STRONG OUTSIDE PRESSURE THAT WOULD FORCE THEM TO CHANGE THEIR PLANS, PRIME MINISTER VORSTER, MUDGE, AND THEIR CLOSE ADVISORS WILL PERSIST ON COURSE THEY HAVE TAKEN WHICH WITHIN FEW YEARS WOULD LEAD TO INDEPENDENT CONFEDERATION OF NAMIBIA, WITH OR WITHOUT OWAMBO AND ITS APPROXIMATELY 350,000 PEOPLE. THIS NAMIBIA WOULD, OF COURSE, RETAIN CLOSE ECONOMIC LINKS WITH SOUTH AFRICA. MUDGE IF HE PROCEEDS AS HE HAS INDICATED, MAY SUCCEED IN ENDING SOME FEATURES OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION NEXT MONTH. IT ALSO POSSIBLE THAT BY NEXT YEAR EVEN MORE SIGNIFICANT MEASURES WILL BE TAKEN IN THIS REGARD. SWAPO'S PERSISTENT OPPOSITION TO CONSTITUTION TALKS, COULD PRECLUDE THEIR ACCEPTANCE BY OAU. HOWEVER, EFFORT TO GET THEM GOING AT LEAST REPRESENTS MANIFESTATION THAT STATUS QUO IS BEGINNING TO END, THAT SOUTH AFRICA KNOWS IT MUST RELINQUISH CONTROL OF TERRITORY, AND THAT WHITES ARE GOING TO HAVE TO MAKE CONCESSIONS (MORE THAN THEY PROBABLY ARE NOW READY TO ACCEPT). AT THIS POINT WHITES REFLECT VORSTER'S ADAMANCY THAT UN WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO INTERFERE IN PROCESS LEADING TO NAMIBIAN INDEPENDENCE.

13. SOME FORMIDABLE OBSTACLES STILL STAND IN WAY OF CONSTITUTIONAL TALKS, BUT THESE DO NOT APPEAR INSUPERABLE. HOWEVER, AS GERMAN CONSUL KREMER OBSERVED TO POL COUNSELOR, GREATEST DIFFICULTY WILL COME WHEN TALKS ACTUALLY BEGIN. THEN DIFFERENCES BETWEEN WHITES' PLAN AND WHAT BLACKS WANT WILL EMERGE. (JUST ONE EXAMPOE: HEREROS SAY THEY WILL INSIST ON HAVING THEIR RIGHTFUL LANDS; NOT WHAT HAS BEEN SET ASIDE FOR HERERO HOMELAND, BUT ROUGHLY TRIANGULAR AREA RUNNING FROM GOBABIS IN EAST, THROUGH WINDHOEK, WEST TO OTJIMBINGWE, AND NORTHEAST PAST OTAVI.) KREMER BELIEVES WHITES AND BLACKS WILL BE POLES APART REGARDING FROM OF NEW GOVERNMENT. MUDGE SAYS HE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT FUTURE OF SWA, BUT EVEN HE ADMITS THAT TALKS WILL BE DIFFICULT. HE SAID HE HOPES FOR "A POLITICAL MIRACLE."
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